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## Synopses of Important Articles.

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SONS OF GOD AND DAUGHTERS OF MEN. By PROFESSOR J. WILLIAM DAWSON. *Expositor*. September 1896, pp. 201-211.

The much discussed section, Gen. 6: 1-8, is an historical event, and is introduced as the occasion of the descent of the new Sethite line into evil. This leads God to determine to destroy mankind after a probation of 120 years. The explanation of the passage which makes the sons of God angels entering into marriage relation with women implies the action of demons or evil angels, and is at variance with all other statements of the Bible respecting angels. The interpretation which makes the sons of God, men of eminence, entering into marriage with women of inferior rank, is trivial and insufficient to account for the facts narrated. A third view, which interprets the passage of Sethite men allying themselves with ungodly Cainite women is rational and natural, but all of these explanations "fail in meeting entirely the historical requirements of the case, and more especially are deficient in their importing into a primeval age conditions belonging to later periods, and in failing to recognize that archaic character of the Book of Genesis which is too much overlooked by most of its modern critics." The fact is the sons of God are the Cainites and the daughters, or men of Adam, are Sethite women. From the day of Cain's birth, when Eve exclaimed, "I have gotten a man," the name *Jahveh* becomes that of the coming Redeemer. The name *Elohim* represents God as creator; the name *Jahveh*, God as the promised Redeemer. The translation, "I have gotten a man from Jahveh," is not correct. The distinction therefore, between *Elohim* and *Jahveh* existed from the time of Eve. It is *Jahveh* later who rebukes Cain, and henceforth Cain may be said to have broken with *Jahveh*. He goes out from the face of *Jahveh* to found a new tribe of men distinct from that of Adam. Cain and his descendants retain the nature-worship of *Elohim*, and so may be termed "sons of *Elohim*." They build cities and cultivate the arts of civilization. The Sethites, however, worship *Jahveh*, retain a hope of a redemption from the fall, but, toward the end of the antediluvian period, degenerate because of intermixture with the Cainites. The giants, or men of violence among the Cainites, capture wives from the feebler Sethites. "The issue of such marriages would necessarily be men of greater power and energy than either of the pure races." Why are not the Sethites called "sons of *Jahveh*"? Because (1) if named in this way at all they should be called "sons of *Jahveh-Elohim*;" (2) since *Jahveh* was a future Redeemer, they could scarcely be called his sons; (3)

they were really the sons of Adam, since Cain had been disinherited and banished. This explains the new beginning of the genealogy of Adam in chapter five, and also the use of the terms Elohim and Jahveh. In confirmation of this theory note the statement concerning Lamech at the end of chapter four, one of the Cainites who captures Sethite wives. The words of Lamech refer to the slaying of a man, probably in the capture of his wives, and are addressed to his wives because he fears they may betray him to their injured relatives. The story of Lamech connects the genealogy of Cain with the narrative of mixed marriages in Gen. 6. Note further the distinction between Jahveh and Elohim in the deluge narrative itself, the two capacities of Redeemer and Creator being recognized. It is Elohim who produces the deluge, instructs Noah as to the ark, delivers him from the receding waters. It is Jahveh, however, whose spirit strives with men, is grieved at heart with their wickedness, grants the respite of 120 years, instructs Noah as to clean beasts, shuts in Noah into the ark, accepts Noah's sacrifice, and promises that there shall never again be a flood. The correct interpretation of the mixed marriages, therefore, furnishes us the keynote for the interpretation of all the early chapters of Genesis. What seems to be an enigmatical expression is simple enough when interpreted from the point of view of primitive times. It is possible that the three races of antediluvian men, namely, Canstadt, Truchère, and Cro-Magnon races, find an explanation in this old account of the antediluvian giants. The first and second represent the lowest and highest physical organization. The third has the characteristics of the half-blood or hybrid. No difficulty is to be found in the question how this account of the antediluvian world has been transmitted. The discoveries in Chaldaea and Egypt, which carry us back long before the time of Abraham, are sufficient to explain the transmission.

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It is difficult to understand how the position taken in this paper could appeal to a mind so acute as that of the author of the paper. A better example of specious reasoning is rarely found. The interpretation is in direct conflict with (1) even the conservative results of criticism; (2) the history of the Messianic idea; (3) the simplest interpretation of words which are used elsewhere in the same sense; (4) any true conception of the material of the first chapters of Genesis. The writer rejects all current explanations on the ground that they fail to recognize the archaic character of the Book of Genesis, and at the same time introduces into the passage more New Testament theology and modern conceptions than were contained in all the current explanations put together.

This article is a fair example of the attempt of a scientist to deal with questions involving a knowledge of the history of theological thought, and is only surpassed, as a failure, by the efforts of theologians to do work in the department of science.

W. R. H.